

al. However, Applicants note that there is no rejection of claims 16, 55, 56 and 62 in connection with the present application. Thus, it is presumed that these claims have not been rejected.

PREFERRED EMBODIMENT OF THE PRESENT APPLICATION

The present application, in one preferred embodiment, is essentially directed to a wizard builder 100, such as that shown in Figure 3 of the present application. The wizard builder is something which can be used to build or create a wizard. To aid in understanding this concept, the idea of a wizard will first be described.

A wizard is essentially a software tool that methodically steps a user through, and therefore simplifies, the creation of a document for example. An example of a wizard for creating the facsimile cover sheet is shown in Figure 1 as element 10 for example. The user is prompted with a series of questions and possibly potential answers to the questions, wherein appropriate answers are selected to create the document, such as a facsimile cover sheet.

Contrary to using a wizard or other type of software tool for creating a document or other type of software tool based upon prompted selectable answers to various questions, the present application, in one preferred embodiment as shown in Figure 3, for example, is directed to an apparatus for creating a software tool or for creating the wizard itself. Thus, a wizard builder 100 is shown in Figure 3 of the present application, wherein the wizard builder requests or prompts input (not just selection of an answer to an existing question) of both questions that will be asked of a user within a created wizard itself, as well as potential selectable answers to that question.

Within the wizard builder 100 as shown in Figure 3, for example, input of a question or procedural step to be carried out is prompted with regard to elements 140 and 142, and potential selectable answers to that question are prompted in areas 150 to 158b for example. Thus, in one embodiment with regard to Applicants' wizard builder 100, the input of process steps used in creating a wizard for example, are prompted, as well as a plurality of potential selections associated with each of the process steps. As such, a wizard can be created, wherein the wizard can ask a series of questions and can provide a series of selectable answers. The wizard can then be used to create a document or specific type of program such as the facsimile cover sheet as shown in Figure 1 for example.

BATCH ET AL.

With regard to the Batch et al. reference, Batch et al. teaches a type of variable software tool, somewhat similar to a wizard (not a wizard builder). The method and apparatus disclosed is for a user-configurable system which integrates and manages operation of a plurality of different tasks and software tools, wherein the system contains a list of software tools which may be run on or with the system, as well as a plurality of rule macros. Input information may also be required from a user for at least some of the tools, wherein default inputs may be provided and may prompt the user as to items which the user must add his input at a given stage in the tool. This is discussed in cols. 3 and 4 of Batch et al.

DISTINCTIONS OVER BATCH ET AL.

With regard to claim 1 for example, Applicants respectfully submit that Batch et al. fails to teach or suggest a software tool creation method comprising at least “prompting input of process steps and a plurality of potential selections associated with each of the process steps”. In Batch et al., the system may prompt the user for selection of one of a plurality of default answers, or input of an answer when inputs to a software tool being executed are required. Thus, at best, Batch et al. arguably prompts the selection of one of a plurality of modifications, or the input of an additional selection.

Accordingly, Batch et al. acts similar to a wizard, such as that shown in Figure 1 of the application, wherein potential answers to a particular question are conveyed to a user to permit the creation of a document or software tool based upon selections made. Although inputs are arguable prompted, these are input answers (not input questions or “process steps” as claimed, wherein input of associated answers or “potential selections associated with each of the process steps” is also prompted, as claimed in claim 1). This is essentially what wizards do; i.e., they provide selectable answers to various steps or questions of a process (for creating a document, creating a program, etc.) to allow a user to easily build a document or program which suits the need of a user.

To the contrary, however, claim 1 of the present application can encompass a wizard builder, wherein the input of necessary information to create a wizard is prompted. Thus, unlike a wizard or a wizard type system such as that shown in Batch et al., in the present application the selection of answers or requests for additional information in answer to a question or process step is not requested, but instead, the input of the actual process step or question itself (as well as

the input of a plurality of potential selections associated with each of the process steps) is requested. Thus, the information necessary to build a wizard, and not the information necessary to create a document from an existing wizard, is prompted in the method step of claim 1 for example.

Again, at best, Batch et al. merely requests information for creating a software tool from wizard-like steps, and has nothing to do with actually creating a wizard-like tool itself. Even further, with regard to the references made in cols. 4 and 8 of Batch et al. by the Examiner, col. 4 deals with requesting selection of one of a plurality of default or other inputs to create a tool (selection of an answer); and col. 8 deals with requesting an input when an input to a software tool being executed is required (input of an answer). Thus, while a variable tool may be able to be created from the wizard-like device of Batch et al., this has nothing to do with prompting for input of information which could be used to create an actual wizard itself, such as the input of process steps and of potential associated selections, as set forth in claim 1 of the present application. Batch et al. is much more analogous to the facsimile set up wizard as shown in Figure 1 of the present application which displays a question 20 to a user along with predetermined selectable answers 22 for example; and thereafter poses a next question as indicated by element 24, along with a predetermined set of possible answers 26.

Somewhat similarly, with regard to independent claim 20, Batch et al. fails to teach or suggest a user interface which is adapted to prompt input of process steps and potential selections associated with each of the process steps; with regard to claim 36, Batch et al. fails to teach or suggest first code for causing a computer to prompt input of process steps and the plurality of potential selections associated with each of the process steps; and with regard to

claim 44, Batch et al. fails to teach or suggest at least a first code segment instructing prompting of input of process steps and a plurality of potential selections associated with each of the process steps. In all the claims, the input of both process steps and associated selections are prompted.

With regard to the various dependent claims, these claims are allowable for at least the reasons previously set forth regarding each of the various independent claims. Still further, with regard to claim 16, this claim clarifies that the created software tool is a wizard, and thus clarifies that claim 1 is directed to a type of wizard builder. Since Batch et al. is more wizard-like it clearly creates a type of variable programs and not a wizard-like tool itself, it thus cannot be a type of wizard builder as set forth in claim 16 of the present application. A somewhat similar argument can be made with regard to each of dependent claims 55 and 56 of the present application for example. Accordingly, this was apparently recognized by the Examiner since each of claims 16, 55 and 56 were not rejected over any prior art of record.

ENTRY OF THE REPLY AFTER FINAL

Applicants respectfully request entry of this Reply After Final in that it raises no new issues which would require further consideration and/or search. The present Reply does not involve amending of any of the claims of the present application and thus should be entered as a matter of right.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, in view of the above remarks, reconsideration of the objections and rejections and allowance of each of claims 1-65 in connection with the present application is earnestly solicited.

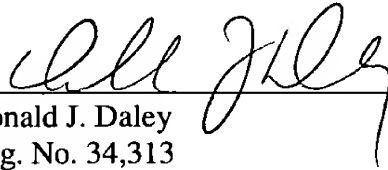
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Donald J. Daley, Reg. No. 34,313 at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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